



International DAY of PEACE 2021

Recovering Better for an Equitable and Sustainable World

Call to Prayer

According to the UN, “The pandemic has been accompanied by a surge in stigma, discrimination, and hatred, which only cost more lives instead of saving them: the virus attacks all without caring about where we are from or what we believe in. Confronting this common enemy of humankind, we must be reminded that we are not each other’s enemy. To be able to recover from the devastation of the pandemic, we must make peace with one another. And we must make peace with nature. Despite the travel restrictions and economic shutdowns, climate change is not on pause. What we need is a green and sustainable global economy that produces jobs, reduces emissions, and builds resilience to climate impacts.”

As we celebrate this Day of Peace, let us reflect on our commitment to the “dignity of life and the care of all creation,” and affirm our pursuit of the *Laudato Si’* goals, which include responding to the cry of the Earth; responding to the cry of the poor; creating an ecologically sustainable economy; adopting simple lifestyles; supporting ecological education; promoting ecological spirituality; and building community awareness, participation and action.

As Pope Francis tells us, “this is a moment to dream big, to rethink our priorities—what we value, what we want, what we seek—and to commit to act in our daily life on what we have dreamed of. What I hear at this moment is similar to what Isaiah hears God saying through him: Come, let us talk this over. Let us dare to dream.”

Opening Song

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

Reading 1 (Pope Francis, *Let Us Dream*)

God asks us to dare to create something new. We cannot return to the false securities of the political and economic systems we had before the crisis. We need economies that give all access to the fruits of creation, to the basic needs of life: to land, lodging, and labor. We need a politics that can integrate and dialogue with the poor, the excluded, and the vulnerable, and that gives people a say in the decisions that impact their lives. We need to slow down, take stock, and design better ways of living together on this Earth. ... It’s a task for all of us, to which each one of us is invited.

~Pause for Reflection~

Reading 2 (*Invitation*, by Mary Oliver)

Oh do you have time
to linger
for just a little while
out of your busy

and very important day
for the goldfinches
that have gathered
in a field of thistles

for a musical battle,
to see who can sing
the highest note,
or the lowest,

or the most expressive of mirth,
or the most tender?
Their strong, blunt beaks
drink the air

as they strive
melodiously
not for your sake
and not for mine

and not for the sake of winning
but for sheer delight and gratitude –
believe us, they say,
it is a serious thing

just to be alive
on this fresh morning
in the broken world.
I beg of you,

do not walk by
without pausing
to attend to this
rather ridiculous performance.

It could mean something.
It could mean everything.
It could be what Rilke meant, when
he wrote:
You must change your life.

*~Pause for reflection: Consider taking 10 minutes to walk outside, or look out a window.
Notice and appreciate all that your senses are discerning. ~*

Time for Sharing

What are your dreams for the future?
What are some lessons human beings should learn from the natural world?
What can you offer as the world rebuilds?

Closing Prayer



Peace to Earth

(Adapted from a prayer by Jane Deren, Center of Concern, *Peace to Our Earth.*)

All: *Peace to earth.*

Peace to this gift of creation,
Which we celebrate
With joy and with reverence.
In the spirit of the first Francis,
May we take time to see
The radiance of creation -
This gift of light and liquid
And green growth.

All: *Peace to earth.*

May we practice nonviolence
Toward our lakes, rivers and seas.
May we renew the living waters
Teeming with life, small and large.
May clean waters quench our deep thirst.

All: *Peace to earth.*

May we practice nonviolence
Toward the land, the very ground of life.
May we restore the soil
so that its richness can give us plentiful food.
May all be nourished by the fruits of the earth.

All: *Peace to earth.*

May we practice nonviolence
Toward air, sky, clouds.
May we respect these gifts
so that we can breathe freely in gentle rain.
May the natural world be a safe home for all.

All: *Peace to earth.*

We pray with our pope, Francis,
Peace to creation,
Which we celebrate
With joy and reverence,
Knowing we hold a fragile world
In our hands -
Just as all of creation holds us in its loving embrace.

This we pray in the name of the Incarnate Christ. Amen.

